

Linda Labbe
Falmouth
LD 209

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70 Ledgewood Drive
Falmouth

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Linda Labbe and I am a resident of Falmouth. I am writing to testify in strong support of Rep. Bell's proposed amendment to LD 209, "Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Implement the Recommendation of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council."

Having this rail trail through my community would be an incredible resource for me, my family, my neighbors. and future generations!

Intended trail use would be cycling, walking, and the opportunity to connect to other green belts in Maine and Canada.

As for frequency of usage, I see the trail being utilized everyday by many. Additionally the ability to do well planned, larger excursions to connect to the northern trail systems and those in Canada.

Trail access has been proven to help community health and well being. The pandemic proved people will use trails in their area for walking, running, cycling, social activities, etc. Look at the success of the Eastern Trail, Sebago to the Sea, Hills to Sea, and The Greenbelt. These trails all get daily use by many.

If we look at the exercise benefit alone that this trail system could offer to the communities involved. We have the ability to offer people better options to improve their physical and mental health. Exercise and movement offers an improvement to heart health, lower cardiovascular disease, help control diabetes, better mental health, to name a few health conditions that affect our communities and health systems.

When we think of community bonding and the ability to connect towns along the corridor, this allows for organized family events, town and city related fund raiser opportunities that can give back to local charities and organizations. this creates economic opportunities for local businesses with people using the trails. The ideas are endless.

This type of trail system preserves green space to protect wildlife migration, protect the waterways surrounding the trails, and create less green house gas emissions with the ability to commute via bike or walking to work or school.

Thank you.
Linda Labbe